

The Idea that Became a Challenge, The Challenge that Became a Passion

By Karla Diaz

Once I said, “When passion is established over conviction and strengthened by knowledge only success can be seen in the horizon.” Wow! I said that on June 30, 2012 in my [Goal Statement](#) when I applied for the Master of Arts in Educational Technology ([MAET](#)) program at Michigan State University ([MSU](#)). Time passes by so quickly and it is in our hands how to spend that time. Almost three years ago I started a journey that was driven by a passion towards teaching and technology. I decided to pursue a challenge that became a powerful tool in my adventure as a teacher from the first lesson learned.

During summer 2012, I started my first out of three courses to obtain the Educational Technology Certification. It was my goal, as I wrote in my [Personal Growth Plan](#) (2012) as part of my [CEP 810](#) course, to successfully acquire this certification, in order to apply to the MAET program. I accomplished both goals; I successfully finished the certification program and I was accepted in the MAET program. Applying to the MAET program generated a desire for establishing new goals and the urge to continue working hard to accomplish the goals that remained from the certification courses.

My first goal was to achieve my master’s degree... to never give up! Today I can proudly say that I am taking my two last courses and that I expect to finish my master’s degree this upcoming May (2015). Moreover, I established goals to enhance my teaching practice and my professional future.

It was my desire to have a classroom to fit the technological generation that is rising. When I started my masters, I was starting my fourth year as a first grade teacher. As I started to open my eyes for all the things that were at my hand to bring to my classroom, I started to take advantage of it. Things that I wanted for my classroom started to get there. The school equipped classrooms with SmartBoards, projectors and a PC that students could use. Also, I decided to use my own iPad with students in the classroom. Everything was falling into place, and I was more able to offer my students an interaction with technology, which means that I was putting into practice what I was learning. One of my favorite projects was the creation of a [First Grade Blog](#) that I used to exhibit student’s creative writing activities. I can say that students were very engage with technology... they loved typing, playing bowling in the SmartBoard to subtract, interacting with stories while reading, and much more.

As for my professional future, my goals were to create technology related workshops and to contribute as a resource to train and support other teachers in my workplace. This is a goal that still remains, as I have the opportunity to help my coworkers. Last December I had the opportunity, as the Curriculum Director approached me, to develop and present a basic Web Design workshop to my co-workers as part of our professional development time at school.

As I reflect on my originals goals, I noticed that nothing changed. My goals have been the same since I started and that I have been able to accomplish most of them. However, some of the goals that I mentioned are goals that I will keep, since I will continue to work to have a classroom that fits the technological generation, and continue to prepare workshops and support teachers in my workplace. Nevertheless, I will add up goals to the ones I previously mentioned along the way, since this journey continues and technology will continue to bring new things to learn and to teach.

“You can, you should, and if you’re brave enough to start, you will.” Stephen King